



CONGRESSIONAL HISPANIC CAUCUS
Michelle Lujan Grisham | Chairwoman
115TH CONGRESS

August 6, 2018

The Honorable Gerónimo Gutiérrez
Mexican Ambassador
1911 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20006

Dear Ambassador Gutiérrez,

As members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we write to inquire about the treatment of individuals who intend on seeking asylum in the United States but currently reside in Mexico after being turned away by the United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP).^[1] Journalists have documented this practice along the southern border, including ports of entry near San Diego, California and along the Texas border.^[2]

While asylum seekers wait to cross the border, they may encounter Mexican officials. For example, the Houston Chronicle recently wrote about a family from Honduras who, after being turned away by CBP, were detained by Mexican authorities for a week.^[3] To our knowledge, the family is still in Mexico deciding their next steps.

Data from the Department of Homeland Security shows that migrants from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras comprised three of the top four countries granted affirmative asylum in 2016.^[4] Further, the number of affirmative asylum applications from these countries has increased 234% from 2014 to 2016.^[5] Given the continued strife in the Northern Triangle region, it follows that individuals traveling through Mexico to seek refuge in the U.S. will not slow. Therefore, we respectfully request answers to the following questions from your government:

1. What is Mexico's current policy for the treatment of individuals in the country seeking asylum in the U.S.?
2. Does the process differ if the asylum seeker has been turned away by CBP?
3. Does the process differ for non-Mexican asylum seekers?
4. How long have these asylum policies been in place?
5. Have these asylum policies changed within the last 6 months?
6. Can you provide an update on the work being done at the National Institute of Migration, National System for Integral Family Development, and the Mexican Commission to Assist Refugees?

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Michelle Lujan Grisham
CHC Chairwoman

Joaquin Castro
CHC First Vice Chair

Ruben Gallego
CHC Second Vice Chair

Pete Aguilar
CHC Whip

Adriano Espaillat
CHC Freshman Representative

^[1] <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/6/5/17428640/border-families-asylum-illegal>

^[2] <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-immigration-caravan/caravan-migrants-weigh-staying-in-mexico-or-risking-u-s-expulsion-idUSKBN1H0043>

^[3] <https://www.texasobserver.org/mexican-authorities-working-with-us-agents-detain-separation-families-refugee-immigrant/>

^[4] https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Refugees_Asylees_2016_0.pdf

^[5] https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Refugees_Asylees_2016_0.pdf